

**NOTES FROM NO-NAME GROUP CONFERENCE CALLS**

**NoName Group Conference Call  
Wednesday, December 15, 1999  
Draft Meeting Notes**

**Attendees:**

Greg Gartrell (Ag/Urban)	Victor Pacheco (DWR)	Dave Briggs (CCWD)
Jim Snow (WWD)	Bruce Herbold (EPA)	Tom Boardman (SLDMWA)
Perry Herrgesell (DFG)	Marty Kjelson (USFWS)	Gary Bobker (TBI)
Spreck Rosekrans (EDF)	Steve Hirsch (USBR)	Lowell Ploss (USBR)
Steve Macaulay (DWR)	Terry Erlewine (SWC)	Art Hinojosa (MWD)
Sheila Greene (DWR)	Debra Mckee (DFG)	John Burke (USBR)
Perry Herrgesell (DFG)	John Lehigh (DWR)	Marc Carpenter (WWD)
Tom Morstein-Marx (USBR)	Kate Le (DWR)	

The NoName Group held a conference call on December 15 to review recent operations and to develop recommendations for future operations.

On November 26, 1999 the Delta Cross Channel gates were closed to better protect out-migrating spring-run salmon per the Spring-run Protection Plan because salmon yearlings were detected at Knights Landing and a pulse was detected at Tisdale. On Nov. 24 DWR operators expressed concern that water quality problems could result from the closure of the gates and the spring tide that would occur over the Thanksgiving weekend.

On Dec. 1, DWR notified the DAT that salinity would soon approach the salinity profile outlined in the Spring-run Protection Plan. The profile is expressed in terms of electrical conductivity at Jersey Point (1.8), Bethel Island (1.0), Holland Tract (0.8), and Bacon Island (0.7). The profile is not designed as a translation of actual compliance at specific locations but instead as an indicator of seawater intrusion that will likely lead to salinity conditions in the south Delta that will be difficult to manage, leading eventually to compliance violations. Although no recommendation to open the gates was made because of the anticipated B2 actions (export reductions), DWR operations staff indicated on the Dec. 1 DAT call that some action would be needed to control salinity. DWR staff recommended to convene another DAT call if water quality continued to degrade to discuss whether to keep the Delta Cross Channel gates closed for fisheries protection or open for water quality protection.

By Dec. 6, all of the salinity profile indicators specified in the Spring-run Protection Plan had been reached or exceeded. At this point DWR operations staff indicated that DWR would recommend on the Dec. 8 DAT call that the gates be opened immediately to manage the salinity intrusion problem.

On Dec. 8 the DAT recommended numerous options for discussion at the Dec. 8 CALFED Ops Group meeting: no change and wait until tomorrow for the (expected) B2

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decision, open the gates to avoid a prolonged opening later in the month, open the gates and reduce exports (open the gates partially and reduce exports several days later), and finally, reduce exports. There was no resolution at the Ops Group Meeting. SWP operations made the decision to increase releases on Dec. 8 due to continuing water quality concerns. The CALFED "small group" met on Dec. 9, 1999 and decided to reduce exports as a way of continuing to protect the spring-run while attempting to improve quality by increasing Delta outflow. On Friday December 10, 1999 total combined exports were reduced to about 4,000 cfs with the SWP at 3,300 cfs and CVP at one unit (800 cfs).

On Dec. 13 the SWP made additional reductions in exports (as measured by Clifton Court Forebay filling) from about 3,300 to 800 cfs. Combined exports were about 1,600 cfs on Dec. 14 (SWP and CVP both at about 800 cfs).

Quality in the western Delta (e.g., Jersey Point and Antioch) improved slightly between Dec. 9 and Dec. 14, mostly because the tides were more favorable (neap cycle) but the higher outflow probably also contributed to the decline in salinity. Quality in the southern Delta degraded at a slower rate. DWR staff believed that compliance levels would be exceeded once the spring tidal cycle began (predicted to begin around Dec. 16) given the existing conditions along Old River.

In response to worsening water quality conditions the cross channel gates were opened on December 14 from 9am to 2 pm. (On the Dec. 13 DAT call, a compromise was reached to recommend partial opening of the gates to coincide with the tide, beginning Dec. 14.). The intent was to open the gates during a tidal cycle that pushed Sacramento River flow south through the channel. Daylight hour operations are easier for the USBR to staff and avoiding dawn and dusk conditions may reduce the number of fish swept through the channel. The gates were re-opened on December 15 at 9 am and remained open following a request by the operators and submittal of an operations plan.

As of December 15 no compliance locations had been violated. EC at Clifton Court Forebay was about 0.97 on Dec. 15. Converted to chloride this EC reading is below the 250 mg/l standard. Titrated chlorides at Rock Slough near the Delta Road Bridge were about 230 mg/L on Dec. 15. Chloride concentration at Pumping Plant #1 (the Rock Slough compliance location) was 200 mg/L. This lower reading was caused by CCWD's lower pumping rate; the high saline water has not yet reached the part of the Contra Costa Canal where compliance is measured.

The next spring tide will start on Dec. 16. DWR expects the 250 mg/L chloride standards at Rock Slough to be violated at some point over the next 7 days - even if the Delta Cross Channel remains open. Standards at CCFB and eventually Tracy PP may also be exceeded. The spring tide that has already begun in the western Delta will build through the next week and will probably offset any quality benefits provided by the open Delta Cross Channel gates.

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On the Dec. 15 call, the NoName Group recommended keeping the gates open and to begin ramping up Banks PP exports at 500 cfs per day as soon as quality starts to improve (probably on Saturday, Dec. 18). The ramping will stop when combined exports reach about 4,100 cfs on Weds. (Dec. 22). This pumping schedule will be altered according to the salinity profile that develops over the next few days. DWR operators will not ramp exports until Jersey Point EC has improved, otherwise lower quality water will be drawn to the export pumps.

#### Assignments and Actions:

The DWR and USBR will develop parameters to close the Delta Cross Channel gates when quality has improved. However, operations will probably be evaluated day-to-day over the next week. Adverse fish conditions do not appear to be severe at this point based on recent monitoring in and upstream of the Delta. The USFWS will recommend that the DCC gates be closed if large numbers of spring-run begin to move toward the Delta (measured by increased catches at monitoring locations or a high flow event). A large migration pulse may only be triggered by high runoff although forecasts are not predicting appreciable precipitation in Northern California in the next 7-10 days. The USFWS also wants to evaluate conditions again before exports exceed 4,100 cfs if the DCC gates are still open. Generally, the USFWS wants to close the gates as soon as water quality conditions have been controlled. The USFWS requested that DWR develop a trigger strategy for closing the gates based on a water quality.

The group requested that the USFWS consider increasing monitoring near the DCC. The USFWS felt that the Sacramento River sampling was sufficient. Consensus among biologists was that sampling near the Delta Cross Channel would not yield much new information.

The DWR and USBR are currently assessing the water supply implications and the forecast for San Luis Reservoir filling. Water accounting associated with these recent actions has not been determined yet. The NoName Group will soon examine actions that will avoid or minimize the storage low point issues in 2000. Export reductions by the SWP could impact contractors in the current water year and could also reduce JPOD opportunities for the CVP.

Spreck Rosekrans will organize a modeling effort through the Bay Delta Modeling Forum to examine how the gates could have been better operated to achieve water quality benefits in the south Delta while remaining closed for a portion of the tidal cycle to limit fish travel into the central Delta.

Bruce Herbold, Victor Pacheco and Marty Kjelson were thanked for their cooperation and constructive thinking during the past few weeks.

Future NoName Group conference calls will be conducted next Friday (Dec. 17), Monday (Dec. 20) and Wednesday (Dec. 22) at 9:00 am. Call details will be distributed.

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